



## **COMMISSION ON SENIORS RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation Number: 20210310-04A: Prioritizing COVID Vaccine appointments to People Aged 70 and Older.**

**WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic has presented unprecedented health challenges;

**WHEREAS**, COVID-19 vaccine immunizations reduce risks of infirmity and death, and provide significant protection from COVID-19 virus infection;

**WHEREAS**, the vaccination of people age 65+, a critical population group, is a priority while in Phase 1-B;

**WHEREAS**, as of February 23, 2021, 10,880 residents in the 80-plus age group had not received an appointment yet after pre-registering through Austin Public Health; another 37,434 people in the 70 to 79 age group had not received an appointment; and another 48,912 in the 60 to 69 age group had not received an appointment.

**WHEREAS**, with the addition of teachers and childcare workers it is expected demand will continue to exceed supply in Phase 1-B at least for the near term; and

**WHEREAS**, news stories document the difficulty for some older adults in registering for a vaccine appointment and service providers have shared frustrations with the vaccine registration system, including the email registration process, over-capacity phone lines and lengthy wait times and that it is difficult for service providers to help older adults schedule vaccine appointments.

It is hereby **RESOLVED** that:

The Commission on Seniors requests the City Council direct Austin Public Health to:

- Continue to focus on the prioritization of the 65 and older population, and especially those age 70 and older, before proceeding to the next Phase;
- Continue to provide and expand the support necessary to gain access to vaccines for these critical population groups, including:
  - Expand capacity for mobile vaccinations targeting homebound older adults and homebound people with disabilities
  - Expand capacity for scheduling appointments via telephone
  - Allow service providers who work with older adults to help clients register for appointments
  - Allow service providers to register clients who do not have their own email address

- Allow secondary contacts, such as family and service providers, who can regularly check email for notification of appointments
- Provide vaccines to volunteer drivers with organizations that commit to driving older adults to vaccine appointments

Vote 13-0

For: Briesemeister, Varteressian, Bordie, Cagle, Garcia-Pittman, Hauser, Jackson, Kareithi, Lugo, Nicola, Temperley, Van Sickle, Spain

Against: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Angel

Attest:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janee Briesemeister". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Jane Briesemeister, Chair